

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Original) An asphalt composition comprising:

0.5 to 50 parts by weight of a block copolymer component (I) comprising at least one modified block copolymer comprising:

a base block copolymer comprising at least one vinyl aromatic polymer block (A) composed mainly of vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon monomer units and at least one conjugated diene polymer block (B) composed mainly of conjugated diene monomer units, and

a modifier group bonded to said base block copolymer, said modifier group having at least one functional group,

said base block copolymer being unhydrogenated or hydrogenated,

100 parts by weight of an asphalt (II), and

0.01 to 10 parts by weight of at least one vulcanizing agent (III) selected from the group consisting of sulfur and a sulfur-containing compound.

2. (Original) The asphalt composition according to claim 1, wherein said block copolymer component (I) is a mixture of:

10 to 90 % by weight of a modified block copolymer (I-A) comprising:

a base block copolymer comprising at least two vinyl aromatic polymer blocks (A) and at least one conjugated diene polymer block (B), and

said modifier group bonded to the base block copolymer,

said base block copolymer being unhydrogenated or hydrogenated; and
90 to 10 % by weight of at least one block copolymer selected from the
group consisting of:

a modified block copolymer (I-B) other than said modified block copolymer
(I-A), which comprises:

a base block copolymer comprising at least one vinyl aromatic polymer
block (A) and at least one conjugated diene polymer block (B), and

said modifier group bonded to the base block copolymer,

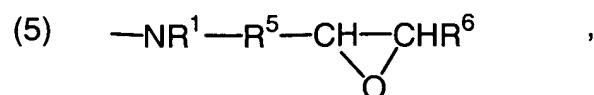
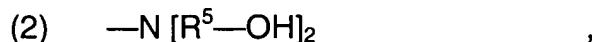
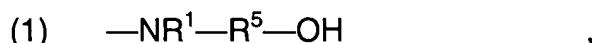
said base block copolymer being unhydrogenated or hydrogenated,

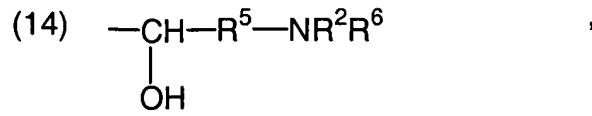
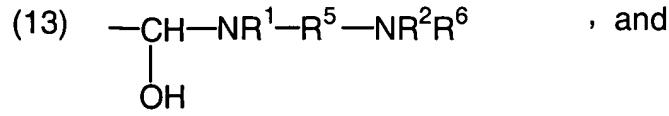
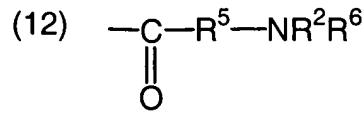
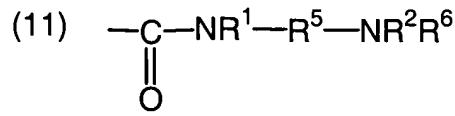
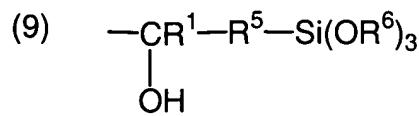
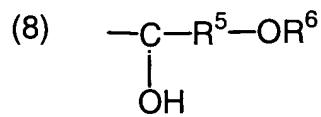
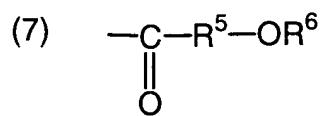
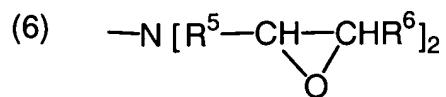
and

an unmodified block copolymer (I-C) comprising at least one vinyl
aromatic polymer block (A) and at least one conjugated diene polymer block (B), said
unmodified block copolymer (I-C) being unhydrogenated or hydrogenated,

wherein each % by weight is based on the weight of said mixture.

3. (Original) The asphalt composition according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said
modifier group has at least one functional group selected from the group consisting of
the functional groups represented by the following formulae (1) to (14):





wherein, in the formulae (1) to (14):

N represents a nitrogen atom, Si represents a silicon atom, O represents an oxygen atom, C represents a carbon atom, and H represents a hydrogen atom, each of R¹ to R⁴ independently represents a hydrogen atom or a C₁-C₂₄ hydrocarbon group which optionally has at least one functional group selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl group, an epoxy group, an amino group, a silanol group and a C₁-C₂₄ alkoxy silane group,

each R⁵ independently represents a C₁-C₄₈ hydrocarbon group which optionally has at least one functional group selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl group, an epoxy group, an amino group, a silanol group and a C₁-C₂₄ alkoxy silane group, and

each R⁶ independently represents a hydrogen atom or a C₁-C₈ alkyi group.

4. (Currently amended) A method for producing the asphalt composition of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 or 2, which comprises:

(1) providing a living block copolymer comprising:

a base block copolymer comprising at least one vinyl aromatic polymer block (A) composed mainly of vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon monomer units and at least one conjugated diene polymer block (B) composed mainly of conjugated diene monomer units, and

lithium ions bonded to the terminals of said base block copolymer,

(2) reacting said living block copolymer with a modifier compound having or being capable of forming at least one functional group, to thereby obtain a modified block copolymer, and

(3) adding the obtained modified block copolymer and at least one vulcanizing agent to a molten form of an asphalt while stirring, said at least one vulcanizing agent being selected from the group consisting of sulfur and a sulfur-containing compound.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 4, wherein said modified block copolymer obtained in step (2) is subjected to hydrogenation.